Claims 1, 2, 7, 8, and 11 have been amended to correct the antecedent basis and indefiniteness issues noted by the Examiner. It is respectfully requested that the claim objections and rejections under 35 USC 112 be withdrawn.

Applicants claim an arrangement for preparing a liquid treatment solution for treating photosensitive material, including: a storage container for storing the treatment solution, which is to be fed to a development compartment; a supply portion for supplying one or more dry components; a reception container for receiving and storing a solvent such as water or distilled water; and a mixing tank connected to the supply portion, the reception container, and the storage container.

The above-described arrangement can provide significant benefits. Because the reception container containing solvent and the supply portion containing dry components are each connected to the mixing tank, it is possible to automatically prepare a treatment solution in the mixing tank while another charge of treatment solution is stored in the storage container, and yet another charge of treatment solution is being utilized in the development compartment, resulting in a number of components arranged in sequence capable of supplying treatment solution in a continuous manner. Moreover, by receiving and storing the solvent in a reception container, an exact amount of solvent can be metered for mixing with the dry components in the mixing tank.

Claims 1-11 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,452,046 to Ishida et al. (hereinafter "Ishida"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

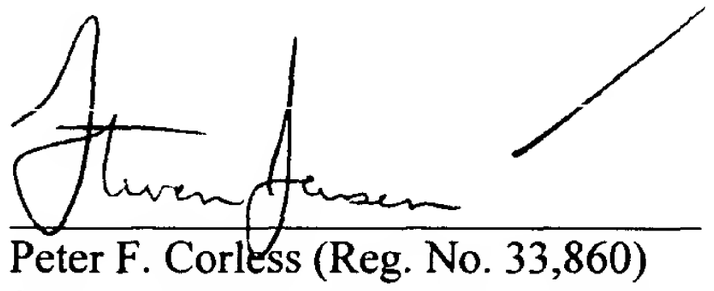
Ishida fails to teach or suggest a reception container for receiving and storing a solvent such as water or distilled water. In Ishida, a solution such as water is manually poured from a pitcher into a tank 20 (column 9, lines 48-52), where it mixes with processing tablets 21 in a section 22 of the tank (see FIG. 1). The pitcher in Ishida is not connected to the tank 20, and thus cannot be construed as a reception container as recited in the Applicants' claimed invention. Moreover, by requiring a manual step of pouring the solution, Ishida is not able to achieve a fully

automatic process for supplying solution to the mixing tank. For the reasons stated above, Ishida cannot anticipate or otherwise render obvious the Applicants' claimed invention.

It is believed the application is in condition for immediate allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: June 5, 2002



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APPENDIX A:
VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Amended) An arrangement for preparing a liquid treatment solution for treating photosensitive material, such as photosensitive film material or photosensitive paper material, comprising:

a) a storage container for storing said treatment solution to be fed to a [treating] development compartment of a treating apparatus;

b) a supply portion for a dry component or dry components and/or dry mixtures of components of said [developer] treatment solution;

c) a reception container for receiving and storing a solvent, [e.g. water, distilled water or the like] such as water or distilled water; and

d) a mixing tank being located between said supply portion, said reception container and said storage container, [said parts] wherein said supply portion, said reception container and said storage container are [being] connected to said mixing tank.

2. (Amended) An arrangement according to claim 1, wherein said supply portion includes at least one and particularly two or more connection locations for connecting replaceable vessels[,] or cartridges [or the like] to introduce said dry component(s) or mixture(s) of components from said replaceable vessels[,] or cartridges [or similar] into said supply portion.

7. (Amended) An arrangement according to claim [1] 6, wherein said [treatment] development compartment includes at least one sensor indicating when to change said treatment solution, said at least one sensor emitting a replenishment signal initiating the transfer of said [treating] treatment solution from said storage container to said [treatment] development department.

8. (Amended) An arrangement according to claim 1, wherein said mixing tank is [being] emptied into said storage container after the [latter] storage container has been emptied into said [treatment] development compartment.

11. (Amended) An arrangement according to claim 1, comprising a control means controlling at least [partially] partial replenishment and/or mixing operations in said arrangement.